



MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO POLLUTION IN SOUTH EAST AND SOUTHERN EUROPE

4-5 December, 2018 Belgrade Serbia

Concept note

Rationale:

The United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment Programme) and the Government of the Republic of Serbia, with the support from the Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea, are convening a Ministerial conference on *Innovative Solutions to Pollution in South East and Southern Europe* on 4-5 December 2018. The conference will focus on the topic of pollution and explore innovative solutions to tackle it, emphasizing the numerous challenges and risks it poses to the region. The conference will bring together high-level governmental representatives from South East European and Southern European countries other interested members of the European Union, the European Union Commission, development agencies, international organizations, civil society, private sector and other relevant stakeholders.

The conference is part of the implementation process of the 2017 United Nations Environment Assembly in which countries agreed to an ambitious vision entitled "[Towards a Pollution-Free Planet](#)". The Conference is also an important milestone for the 2019 Assembly that will take place in March 2019 in Nairobi, Kenya which will gather the international community around the identification of innovative solutions to environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production.

The insights and analysis presented in the framework of the conference will provide a critical cornerstone for the discussion of a pollution-free environment for South East Europe and provide a strategic platform for the development of a joint approach and vision for South East European countries to be presented at the Fourth United Nations Environment Assembly.

Objectives:

- To engage countries in the region to sustain actions to achieve the vision set out in the declaration "*Towards a pollution-free planet*";
- To identify innovative solutions and suggested interventions to address pollution using the following areas: policy interventions; environmentally sound technologies; sustainable financing schemes; education, research and development and capacity-building; and private and public partnerships.



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- To provide a high-level platform for Ministers from the South East European and Southern European Countries to identify a common approach to pollution in the region and development of a “*Joint Regional Vision on Innovative Solutions to Pollution*”;
- To engage Ministers in the process of defining the Ministerial declaration and draft resolutions for the 2019 UN Environmental Assembly which will focus on “*Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production*”;

Date and venue

The Ministerial conference on *Innovative Solutions to Pollution in South East and Southern Europe* will take place on 4-5 December 2018. The venue for the conference is Palace of Serbia in Belgrade, Serbia. The language of the Conference will be English. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided for Serbian.

Contacts for further information

The UN Environment Programme will serve as secretariat of the conference. In this regard interested stakeholders can contact Mr. Harald Egerer, Head of Office – UN Environment – Vienna Programme Office (harald.egerer@un.org).

Attachments

[Draft programme of the Ministerial Conference](#)



Preliminary Programme

Innovative Solutions to Pollution in South East and Southern Europe

Preliminary Conference Programme

4 – 5 December 2018

Palace of Serbia, Belgrade

4 December 2018 09.30 – 13.00 <i>UNEA 4 Informal Preparatory Ministerial Consultation for South East and Southern Europe</i>	
A) Participants	Governments, international and regional organization, Donor Agencies, Local Authorities, Civil Society Organizations, and the Private Sector
B) Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation of the status of preparations for the 2019 Environment Assembly; - Discussion on the 2017 UN Environment Assembly Ministerial Declaration and resolutions addressing various aspects of pollution including the draft 2017 UN Environment Assembly Implementation Plan; - Presentation of the 2019 UN Environment Assembly theme (<i>Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production</i>), and presentation of the draft thematic report
C) Expected outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved understanding of UN Environment Assembly 3 resolutions on pollution, and appraisal of the expected outcomes of UN Environment Assembly 4; - Enhanced recognition of the role of the United Nations Environment Assembly as world's highest decision-making body on global environment and the opportunities for South East European Countries to engage.

4 December 2018 14.30 – 18.00 <i>Towards a Pollution-Free South East and Southern Europe</i>	
A) Participants	Governments, international and regional organization, Donor Agencies, Local Authorities, Civil Society Organizations, and the Private Sector
B) Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation of solutions to pollution-related regional challenges. In addition, South East European countries will get the opportunity to present various national pollution challenges and present their plans of actions.



C) Expected outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accelerating the implementation of the 2017 UN Environment Assembly Ministerial Declaration, resolutions, commitments and pledges from UNEA 3 in addressing pollution in the region, while also supporting Governments, The Private Sector and other stakeholders in raising their level of ambition. - Adoption of the “<i>Joint Regional Vision on Innovative Solutions to Pollution</i>”
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5 December 2018 09.30 – 18.00 <i>Multi-stakeholder meeting</i>	
A) Participants	Governments, International and regional organization, Donor Agencies, Local Authorities, Civil Society Organizations, and the Private Sector
B) Topics	<p>The second day would take the form of multi-stakeholder round tables, which will be organised in an interactive manner, allowing the audience to participate in the discussions. The round tables will serve to collect information on progress made to move towards a pollution-free South East and Southern Europe.</p> <p>Proposed thematic round tables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round table 1 The Role of the Private Sector: From Pollution to Solution • Round table 2 Local Authorities: At the forefront in addressing pollution • Round table 3 How can research institutions, and civil society organizations work with governments and the private sector to address pollution challenges – Strengthening the Science – Policy – Society Interface • Round table 4 Pollution as global concern: Engaging with international partners to build capacity
C) Expected outcomes	<p>Round table 1 will focus on the role of the Private Sector in the path towards pollution-free South East Europe, exploring the ways in which businesses could play an active and positive role in addressing pollution and pollution related challenges. Topics could range from corporate social responsibility approaches, to green technologies and scientific innovation in the field of pollution. Round table 1 is expected to contribute to enhancing partnerships with the private sector in the region.</p>



	<p>Round table 2 will focus on the role of local authorities, identifying the ways in which they can contribute to the concrete implementation of the Ministerial Declaration and 2017 UN Environment Assembly resolutions utilizing their role as an interface between Government and local communities. Round table 2 is expected to contribute to identifying a programme of actions on pollution based on voluntary commitments at the national and local level.</p> <p>Round table 3 will focus on the role of research institutes and other knowledge providers in responding to pollution related challenges through science, technology and awareness raising. Additionally, it will also identify the ways in which Civil Society Organisations and other stakeholders can work together with governments and the private sector in addressing pollution related challenges by building on the contributions of science and innovative technologies towards achieving of the most relevant Sustainable Development Goals. Round table 3 is expected to contribute to strengthening partnerships to mobilize political will public awareness on pollution issues.</p> <p>Round table 4 will focus on the role international partnerships can have in the field of capacity building and exchange of experiences in dealing with pollution-related challenges. This round table will provide participants with an updated review on Best Available Technologies and approaches from other countries in dealing with pollution concerns. Round table 4 is expected to contribute to create further international synergies and to mobilize possible additional resources.</p>
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